

IN THE CLAIMS:

The following is a complete listing of the claims, reflects the only changes currently being made thereto, and replaces all earlier versions and listings:

1. - 11. (canceled)

12. (currently amended): A network-connectable apparatus, comprising:

a restricting device adapted to restrict access to the network-connectable apparatus by another apparatus in accordance with a status of the network-connectable apparatus;

a detecting device adapted to detect whether a request from the other apparatus is a request for inquiry about update of a file;

a discrimination device adapted to discriminate, based on detection by said detecting device, whether a file corresponding to a file cached by the other apparatus has been updated, wherein said discrimination device makes its discrimination in accordance with time information included in the request; and

a sending device adapted, in the case where the access to the network-connectable apparatus by the other apparatus is not restricted by said restricting device, selectively to send information representing that the file corresponding to the file cached by the other apparatus has not been updated, to the other apparatus, or to send the updated file to the other apparatus, in accordance with the discrimination by said discrimination device, and,

in the case where the access to the network-connectable apparatus by the other apparatus is restricted by said restricting device, to send information representing that the access is rejected to the other apparatus, regardless as to whether or not the file corresponding to the file cached by the other apparatus is updated, wherein the information representing the access-rejection is information for describing a screen image which indicates in the other apparatus the reason for the access restriction.

13. and 14. (cancelled).

15. (previously presented): The network-connectable apparatus according to claim 12, wherein said restricting device restricts access by the other apparatus in accordance with whether the network-connectable apparatus is under maintenance.

16. (currently amended): A network-connectable apparatus, comprising:
a restricting device adapted to restrict access by another apparatus in accordance with a status of the network connectable apparatus;
a detection device adapted to detect time information related to a file possessed by the other apparatus;
a discrimination device adapted to discriminate whether ~~information~~ a file corresponding to a file cached by the other apparatus has been updated, in accordance with time information detected by said detection device; and
a sending device adapted, in the case where the access to the network-connectable apparatus by the other apparatus is not restricted by said restricting device,

selectively to send information representing that the file corresponding to the file cached by the other apparatus has not been updated, to the other apparatus, or to send the updated file to the other apparatus, in accordance with the discrimination by said discrimination device, and,

in the case where the access to the network-connectable apparatus by the other apparatus is restricted by said restricting device, to send information representing that the access is rejected to the other apparatus, regardless as to whether or not the file corresponding to the file cached by the other apparatus is updated, wherein the information representing access-restriction is information for describing a screen image which indicates in the other apparatus the reason for the access restriction.

17. (previously presented): The network-connectable apparatus according to claim 16, wherein, in a case in which access-restriction is made, said sending device sends the information representing that the access is rejected to the other apparatus without performance of discrimination by said discrimination device.

18. (previously presented): The network-connectable apparatus according to claim 16, wherein said restricting device restricts access by the other apparatus in accordance with whether the network-connectable apparatus is under maintenance.

19. (canceled).

20. (previously presented): A control method for a network-connectable apparatus, comprising:

- a restriction step of restricting access to the network-connectable apparatus by another apparatus in accordance with a status of the network-connectable apparatus;
- a detecting step of detecting whether a request from the other apparatus is a request for inquiry about update of a file;
- a discrimination step of discriminating whether a file corresponding to a file cached by the other apparatus has been updated, in accordance with the detection in said detecting step, wherein said discrimination step makes its discrimination in accordance with time information included in the request; and
- a sending step of, in the case where the access to the network-connectable apparatus by the other apparatus is not restricted, selectively sending information representing that the file corresponding to the file cached by the other apparatus has not been updated, to the other apparatus, or sending the updated file to the other apparatus, in accordance with the discrimination in said discrimination step, and,
- in the case where the access to the network-connectable apparatus by the other apparatus is restricted, sending information representing that the access is rejected to the other apparatus, regardless as to whether or not the file corresponding to the file cached by the other apparatus is updated, wherein the information representing the access-restriction is information for describing a screen image which indicates in the other apparatus the reason for the access restriction.

21. (previously presented): A control method for a network-connectable apparatus, comprising:

a restricting step of restricting access by another apparatus in accordance with a status of the network-connectable apparatus;

a detection step of detecting time information related to a file possessed by the other apparatus;

a discrimination step of discriminating whether a file corresponding to a file cached by the other apparatus has been updated, in accordance with time information detected in said detection step; and

a sending step of, in the case where the access to the network-connectable apparatus by the other apparatus is not restricted, selectively sending information representing that the file corresponding to the file cached by the other apparatus has not been updated, to the other apparatus, or sending the updated file to the other apparatus, in accordance with the discrimination in said discrimination step, and,

in the case where the access to the network-connectable apparatus by the other apparatus is restricted, sending information representing that the access is rejected to the other apparatus, regardless as to whether or not the file corresponding to the file cached by the other apparatus is updated, wherein the information representing the access-rejection is information for describing a screen image which indicates in the other apparatus the reason for the access restriction.